

REMARKS

Support for the proposed amendments of the claims can be found in the penultimate paragraph of page 2 and the first full paragraph of page 3 of the specification.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, U.S. Patent No. 5,295,183 to Langlois does not disclose mesh nodes with a plurality of switches.

Furthermore, U.S. Patent No. 5,539,815 to Samba merely discloses the interconnection of all switches in a telecommunications system. For example, with respect to Fig. 2 and not Fig. 3 as indicated by the Examiner, the three-switch arrangement consists of a pair of interconnected switches C1 and C2 *both* switches being also connected to switches A *and* B. There is nothing in the text of Samba to suggest that switch A could be solely connected to C1 and that switch B could be solely connected to C2. To the contrary, in the telecommunications system disclosed, as stated at col. 3, lines 41-45, "each of the illustrated switches is connected by a group of communication channels (trunk group) to each of the other switches".

New claims 6 and 9 now clarify that mesh nodes with multiple switches are connected to other mesh nodes such that the connections to other mesh nodes are divided between the multiple switches within the mesh node.

Accordingly, even if Samba could be correctly combined with Langlois, the combination of the references would not teach the division of the connections associated with a mesh node between the switches of that mesh node, nor would the combination render the invention obvious. To the contrary, Samba teaches that all switches of all mesh nodes must be interconnected "in order to provide increased telecommunication system reliability in the event of a failure of one switch", see col. 4, lines 33-34.

Therefore, the applicants contend that independent claims 6 and 9 and their dependent claims 7-8 and 10 are now allowable.

U.S. Patent No. 4,727,577 to Frey has only been considered by the Examiner with respect to original claim 2 and as such has not been considered in this response, since claim 7 which replaced claim 2 is dependent on valid claim 6.

Replacement sheets for Figs. 2-5 of the drawings are enclosed. The term "Outer Nodes" in Figs. 2-5 has been replaced by the term "Local Nodes". Support for this amendment can be found in the last four paragraphs of page 2 of the specification.

Applicants respectfully submit that it is unnecessary to add reference numerals to the drawings as there are so few elements in the drawings and the nature of such elements is clearly indicated by associated legends. Furthermore, the elements of the drawings are adequately described in the description such that a person skilled in the art would completely understand the disclosure. Reconsideration of this requirement is respectfully requested.

Wherefore, a favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRSCHSTEIN, OTTINGER, ISRAEL & SCHIFFMILLER, P.C.

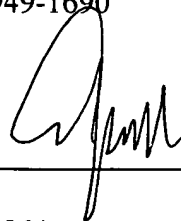
Attorneys for Applicant(s)

489 Fifth Avenue

New York, New York 10017-6105

Tel: (212) 697-3750

Fax: (212) 949-1690



Alan Israel

Reg. No. 27,564